

(2) Statutory authority for the Service to implement this project exists subject to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Act, Public Law 102-212;

(3) The Proposed Action Alternative represents the best balance between the Service's goals and objectives and the public's concerns identified throughout the public participation process; and

(4) Consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives, the Proposed Action Alternative is one which minimizes or avoids adverse environmental effects to the maximum extend practicable.

Having made the above findings, the Service has decided to proceed with implementation of the Revised Proposed Action Alternative.

This Record of Decision will serve as the written facts and conclusions relied on it reaching this decision.

Dated: December 13, 1995.

Cathleen I. Short,
Acting Regional Director, Region 5, Hadley,
Massachusetts.

[FR Doc. 95-30768 Filed 12-18-95; 8:45 am]

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INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

[Docket No. AB-167 (Sub-No. 1155X)]

Consolidated Rail Corporation— Abandonment Exemption—In Middlesex County, NJ

Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon approximately 1.4 miles of rail line extending between approximately milepost 25.00 and milepost 267.40 in Middlesex County, NJ.

Conrail has certified that: (1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Commission or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of the complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental report), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic report), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to use of this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10505(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on January 18, 1996, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29³ must be filed by December 29, 1995. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under CFR 1152.28 must be filed by January 8, 1996, with: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, Interstate Commerce Commission,⁴ Washington, DC 20423-2191.

A copy of any pleading filed with the Commission should be sent to applicant's representative: John J. Paylor, Associate General Counsel, Consolidated Rail Corporation, Two Commerce Square, 2001 Market Street, P.O. Box 41416, Philadelphia, PA 19101-1416.

If the notice of exemption contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

Conrail has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by December 22, 1995. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 3219, Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling

¹ The Commission will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Commission in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Commission may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

² See *Exempt. of Rail Abandonment—Offers of Finan. Assist.*, 4 I.C.C.2d 164 (1987).

³ The Commission will accept a late-filed trail use request so long as the abandonment has not been consummated and the abandoning railroad is willing to negotiate an agreement.

⁴ Legislation to sunset the Commission on December 31, 1995, and transfer remaining functions is now under consideration in Congress. Until further notice, parties submitting pleadings should continue to use the current name and address.

Elaine Kaiser, Chief of SEA, at (202) 927-6248. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Decided: December 12, 1995.

By the Commission, David M. Konschnik,
Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

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NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

[Notice 95-114]

National Environmental Policy Act; Mars Global Surveyor Mission

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and
Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Finding of no significant
impact.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and NASA policy and procedures (14 CFR Part 1216 Subpart 1216.3), NASA has made a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) with respect to the proposed Mars Global Surveyor (MGS) mission, which would involve a flight to and orbit about Mars. The baseline mission calls for the MGS spacecraft to be launched aboard a Delta II 7925 from Cape Canaveral Air Station (CCAS), Florida, in November 1996.

DATES: Comments on the FONSI must be provided in writing to NASA on or before January 18, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Ms. Mary Kaye Olsen, NASA Headquarters, Code SLP, 300 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20546. The Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the MGS mission which supports this FONSI may be reviewed at the following locations:

(a) NASA Headquarters, Library, Room 1J20, 300 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20546.

(b) Spaceport USA, Room 2001, John F. Kennedy Space Center, Florida, 32899. Please call Lisa Fowler beforehand at 407-867-2468 so that arrangements can be made.

(c) Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Visitors Lobby, Building 249, 4800 Oak Grove Drive, Pasadena, CA 91109 (818-354-5179).

The EA may also be examined at the following NASA locations by contacting the pertinent Freedom of Information Act Office:

(d) NASA, Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, CA 94035 (415-604-4190).

(e) NASA, Dryden Flight Research Center, Edwards, CA 93523 (805-258-3448).

(f) NASA, Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, MD 20771 (301-286-0730).

(g) NASA, Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX 77058 (713-483-8612).

(h) NASA, Langley Research Center, Hampton, VA 23665 (804-864-6125).

(i) NASA, Lewis Research Center, 21000 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, OH 44135 (216-433-2313).

(j) NASA, Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL 35812 (205-544-5252).

(k) NASA, Stennis Space Center, MS 39529 (601-688-2164).

A limited number of copies of the EA are available by contacting Ms. Mary Kaye Olsen at the address or telephone number indicated herein.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Kaye Olsen, 202-358-0304.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NASA has reviewed the EA prepared for the MGS mission and has determined that it represents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level of associated environmental impacts. The EA is incorporated by reference in this FONSI.

NASA is proposing to launch the MGS mission, which would deliver a single polar-orbiting spacecraft to Mars in 1997. MGS would be inserted into an elliptical capture orbit in September 1997 and, over the next 4 months, would use thruster firings and aerobraking techniques to reach a nearly circular, low-altitude, polar-mapping orbit. The orbit would allow the spacecraft to be illuminated by the sun in the same way throughout the Martian year. Aerobraking, a technique which uses the forces of atmospheric drag to slow the spacecraft for orbital maneuvers, would provide a means of minimizing the amount of fuel required to reach the final low Mars mapping orbit. The spacecraft carries no radioactive material. The proposed action calls for using a Delta II 7925 launch vehicle with a Payload Assist Module-Delta (PAM-D) upper stage to inject the MGS spacecraft into an Earth-Mars trajectory in November 1996.

The science objectives for the MGS mission are to fulfill most of the critical science objectives of the failed Mars Observer mission. To satisfy the mission's purpose, the MGS spacecraft would carry nearly a full duplicate of the Mars Observer instrument payload, and would use those instruments to acquire Mars surface data for a full Martian year (approximately 2 Earth years). These objectives include detailed global maps of surface topography, the distribution of minerals, the planet's mass, size, and shape, the characterization of Mars' gravitational and magnetic fields, and the monitoring of global weather. These data and investigations could help scientists better understand the current state of water on Mars, the evolution of the planet's formation and atmosphere, and the factors that led to major changes in the Martian climate. Other data acquired from this mission could provide insight into the evolution of both Earth and the solar system. MGS could then support possible future Mars missions, by providing relay capability for surface science stations and landers.

Alternatives that were evaluated include (1) No-Action (*i.e.*, no Mars Global Surveyor mission); and (2) launch vehicles options, including the Space Shuttle, Titan, and Atlas configurations, foreign launch vehicles, as well as other Delta configurations. Failure to undertake the MGS mission would disrupt the execution of NASA's Solar System Exploration Program, as defined by the Agency's Solar System Exploration Committee. Cancellation of the MGS mission would leave a gap in the orderly exploration of Mars, and would retard NASA's attainment of scientific data on the surface and atmosphere of Mars, which is critical to future explorations of Mars. Of the launch vehicles evaluated, the Delta II 7925/PAM-D most closely matches the MGS mission requirements, has superior reliability, minimizes adverse environmental impacts, and is also the lowest in cost.

Expected impacts to the human environment associated with the mission arise almost entirely from the normal launch of the Delta II 7925. Air emissions from the exhaust produced by the solid propellant graphite epoxy motors and liquid first stage primarily include carbon monoxide, hydrochloric acid, aluminum oxide in soluble and insoluble forms, carbon dioxide, and deluge water mixed with propellant by-products. Air impacts will be short-term and not substantial. Short-term water quality and noise impacts, as well as short-term effects on wetlands, plants, and animals, would occur in the

vicinity of the launch complex. These short-term impacts are of a nature to be self-correcting, and none of these effects would be substantial. There would be no impact on threatened or endangered species or critical habitat, cultural resources, or floodplains. Accident scenarios have also been addressed.

The second stage would be ignited at an altitude of 129 kilometers (80 miles), which is in the ionosphere. Although the second stage would achieve orbit, its orbital decay time would fall below the limit NASA has set for orbital debris consideration. After burning its propellant to depletion, the second stage would remain in low Earth orbit until its orbit eventually decayed. The MGS Project has followed the NASA guidelines regarding orbital debris and minimizing the risk of human casualty for uncontrolled reentry into the Earth's atmosphere. No other impacts of environmental concern have been identified.

The level and scope of environmental impacts associated with the launch of the Delta II 7925 vehicle are well within the envelope of impacts that have been addressed in previous FONSI's concerning other launch vehicles and spacecraft. No significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns associated with the launch vehicle have been identified which would affect the earlier findings.

On the basis of the MGS EA, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts associated with the mission would not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. NASA will take no final action prior to the expiration of the 30-day comment period.

Dated: December 13, 1995.

Wesley T. Huntress, Jr.,

Associate Administrator for Space Science.

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Temporary Closing of Reference Service on Certain Textual Records

AGENCY: National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

ACTION: Notice of revised schedule of closure and reopening of reference services for certain textual records holdings in the National Archives related to the move to the National Archives at College Park (Archives II) and the relocation of some records to the National Archives Building.